

DELIBERATIVE PROCESS—DO NOT CITE OR SHARE
Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment
Release Date Extension Communications Plan
DRAFT—FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

December 17, 2012

Contact:

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Background

~~Completion of the Bristol Bay Assessment has been delayed until mid-2013. EPA will continue work to complete the Bristol Bay Watershed assessment into 2013.~~ The Agency had originally been working toward a December 2012 completion date.

EPA launched a scientific assessment of the Bristol Bay Watershed in February 2011 in response to requests from federally-recognized tribal governments and other organizations in Alaska and elsewhere, who raised significant concerns about potential impacts of large-scale mining on Bristol Bay salmon fisheries.

Marianne and Hanady will field calls from reporters and consider possible responses in coordination with the Bristol Bay team and the HQ press office.

Media Contacts: Marianne Holsman, Region 10 Public Affairs Director; Hanady Kader, Region 10 Bristol Bay press officer

EPA Statement on Release of Final Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment
INSERT FINAL TEXT HERE

External Communications Schedule

NOTE: ALL TIMES ARE IN PACIFIC DAYLIGHT TIME

DATE/TIME	CALL OR ACTION	WHO	DONE?
Dec. XX	Notify stakeholders (tribes, NGOs, industry, etc.) by phone of decision to continue working on assessment into 2013	Rick, Tami, Cara	
Dec. XX	One hour after stakeholder notifications, send final statement to listserv and update website	Judy, Charles	

Bristol Bay Reporters

National Outlets	Local Outlets
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Associated Press Becky Bohrer (Juneau) bbohrer@ap.org 907-586-1515 Personal Phone / Ex. 6 (cell) apanchorage@ap.org apjuneau@ap.org	Anchorage Daily News Lisa Demer, reporter ldemer@adn.com 907-257-4390 David Hulen, State and Local News Editor 907-351-9015 dhulen@adn.com Frank Gerjevic, Editorial writer fgerjevic@adn.com
Bloomberg/Reuters Yereth Rosen Nonresponsive Personal Email / Ex. 6 907-349-4588	Alaska Public Radio Network Daysha Eaton deaton@alaskapublic.org 907-550-8444 Steve Heime sheime@aprn.org 907-550-8400
Greenwire Manuel Quinones 202-491-5606 202-446-0412 mquinones@eenews.net	KDLG Radio, Dillingham Dave Bending kdlgreporter@dlgsd.org Mike Mason mmason@dlgsd.org 907-842-5281
Frontline Blaine Harden Nonresponsive Personal Email / Ex. 6 206-432-0961	The Fishermen's News Margie Bauman Nonresponsive Personal Email / Ex. 6 907-376-4996-home office Personal Phone / Ex. 6 mobile
60 Minutes Andrew Metz MetzA@cbsnews.com	Pebble Watch Mariah Oxford 907-563-0013 moxford@bristol-companies.com
Outside Magazine Tim Sohn Nonresponsive Personal Email / Ex. 6 646-403-9927 617-905-9927	Seattle Magazine Langdon Cook Nonresponsive Personal Email / Ex. 6
McClatchy Sean Cockerham scockerham@mcclatchydc.com Energy, resources and Interior Department Correspondent McClatchy Newspapers Washington Bureau (202) 383-6016	

Q&A

Why is EPA not going to meet its December 2012 deadline?

EPA received ~~almost over~~ 233,000 public comments (~~over 236,000 if late comments are included~~) on the Bristol Bay Watershed Assessment and feedback from the peer review panel that convened in August 2012. ~~EPA is currently updating and revising the Assessment in response to public comments and the suggestions provided by external peer reviewers.~~

~~EPA will convene a group of qualified experts to review the revised draft assessment. The schedule, scope and methodology of this additional review have not been determined. EPA will release an updated, revised report after all public comments, and comments from external peer reviewers, have been fully considered. No schedule for the release of the completed assessment has been determined.~~

~~in light of the comments offered by the first peer review panel. The Agency needs more time to develop the schedule, scope, related contracts, charge and methodology of this additional review.~~

~~EPA will release a final report until it has addressed the comments identified during the peer review and public review process.~~

~~In addition, EPA will convene a group of qualified experts to review the revised draft assessment in light of the comments offered by the first peer review panel. The Agency needs more time to develop the schedule, scope, related contracts, charge and methodology of this additional review.~~

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How much will this report change as a result of feedback from the peer review panel and public comments?

We are considering the public comments and peer review comments as we move ahead in updating and finalizing the assessment.

How much did the original peer review process cost and how much will this additional review cost?

The costs of the peer review will be available when all tasks associated with the peer review are complete. This includes delivery of the final peer review report and the preparation of EPA's response to comments documents.

One of the peer review panelists had some pointed criticisms about [insert issue] in your assessment. Are you going to be considering all of their feedback?

We received the comment and are evaluating how comments ~~that are~~ within the scope of the assessment can be used to improve our assessment.

What is the process from this point forward?

We are revising the assessment based on feedback from the peer review panelists and public comments before ~~completing the assessment making it final. At this time, EPA has no further actions scheduled.~~

Is EPA going to invoke Clean Water Act section 404 (c) to protect Bristol Bay?

EPA has not made that decision. Right now, our focus is on completing the assessment.

In late 2010, EPA received petitions from nine tribal governments requesting that we use our authority under Section 404(c) of the Clean Water Act to protect Bristol Bay from potential large-scale mining. We also received requests for EPA to allow the permitting process to run its normal course. EPA chose to conduct a watershed assessment to assess the risks of large-scale mining to the salmon fishery of the Kvichak and Nushagak watersheds. We felt that this course of action was responsive to both requests and would help inform any future decisions by the agency.

Comments Summary

As of 8/21 EPA has received approximately 236,000 public comments on the draft assessment. This total includes approximately 3,300 late comments, 450 of which are unique letters. Including two late mass mailing campaigns,

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twenty-eight different mass mailing campaigns have generated a total of approximately 230,000 letters. Twenty-two of these campaigns, generating approximately 220,000 letters, expressed support for the assessment and/or EPA action. Five campaigns, generating approximately 9,000 letters were not supportive of the assessment and/or EPA action. The remaining mass mailer signed by 318 people, requested a comment period extension.